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24th plenary meeting
Monday, 7 October 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Jan Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Second report of the General Committee (A/57/250/Add.1)

The Acting President: I should like to draw the attention of representatives to the second report of the General Committee (document A/57/250/Add.1), concerning a request by the delegation of Cambodia for the inclusion of an additional sub-item under agenda item 22, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations".

The General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional sub-item, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations", be included as a sub-item of agenda item 22, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional sub-item as a sub-item of agenda 22 in the agenda of the current session?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional sub-item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider the additional sub-item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I should like to inform Members that the new sub-item becomes sub-item (s) of agenda item 22.

Agenda item 44 and agenda item 10 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/270 and A/57/270/Corr.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): Today, I should like to focus on the following three areas, which are currently high on the United Nations agenda: international peace and security, development and United Nations reform.

Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of their means of delivery has become a task of the greatest urgency in the maintenance of

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international peace and security. Weapons of mass destruction are a particularly grave threat when they are used for terrorism. At this time, the issue of Iraq is of profound concern to the international community. It is essential that Iraq allow inspections without any conditions or restrictions and that it comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions. We believe that the Security Council should seek to adopt appropriate and necessary resolutions in order to gain international cooperation in resolving that issue.

The relaxation of tensions on the Korean Peninsula is essential for peace and stability in north-east Asia. At the recent summit meeting between Japan and North Korea, North Korea expressed its intention to work with sincerity to resolve humanitarian issues, such as the abduction of Japanese nationals, and security issues, such as its nuclear and missile activities. Japan intends to undertake strenuous efforts to resolve those and other important issues in the process of the resumed normalization talks and to realize a normalization of relations, thereby contributing to the peace and stability of the region.

The recent relationship between India and Pakistan is of serious concern to us. We want to urge both countries to seek a reduction of tensions and a resumption of dialogue, not only for the sake of peace and stability in South Asia, but also for the world. On the other hand, Japan welcomes the commencement of peace talks between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which are meant to bring about peace and reconstruction in Sri Lanka. Japan is prepared to cooperate in the peace talks and in the reconstruction process.

Concerning Afghanistan, it is important for the international community to promote cooperation to ensure security and steadily to fulfil its commitments to assist that country. In this regard, Japan is now preparing a program called "Register for Peace", to facilitate the reintegration of former combatants. In our view, ensuring a seamless transition from humanitarian assistance to recovery and reconstruction assistance is critically important for the stability of Afghanistan. Cooperation for the construction of roads which connect major cities is an especially urgent need, as is a comprehensive regional development programme through, inter alia, resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons.

I would also like to touch upon the situation in the Middle East. It is crucial that the vision of the peaceful coexistence of Israel and an independent Palestinian State be materialized as early as possible. However, the most urgent task is for both parties to rebuild mutual trust and put an end to the vicious circle of violence. Towards that end, Japan strongly urges Israel immediately to withdraw its troops to the line of September 2000, halt its military operations and lift closures in the autonomous areas; at the same time, Japan resolutely condemns terrorist acts by Palestinian extremists.

Let me also refer to the situation in Africa. We are encouraged by the positive movements there, such as the establishment of peace in Angola and a partial ceasefire in the Sudan. On the other hand, to our regret, efforts for national reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire are retrogressing. Violence and bloodshed must be stopped immediately. In this regard, we deeply appreciate and support the efforts made by the African people themselves through, for example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which has been seeking to undertake arbitration.

There is a clear causal link between development on the one hand and peace and stability on the other. Where instability, conflicts and war prevail, we see sorrow, tears, frustration, lack of development and poverty. Where there is stability and peace, we find joy, smiles, hopes and steady development. Development also has a lot to do with the enhancement of human security. Incidentally, human security is a concept to which Japan attaches great importance, and we are looking forward to the final report which the Commission on Human Security, co-chaired by Mrs. Ogata and Professor Sen, is going to issue next spring.

Having said that, I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the following historical fact. In the 1960s, the per capita gross national product of countries in East Asia was similar to that of sub-Saharan African countries. Since then, however, East Asian countries have dramatically increased their per capita gross national product, and in the past 10 years the proportion of the population living in poverty has been successfully cut in half. Such sustainable growth has been described as the "East Asian miracle." Naturally, it is not at all my intention to be boastful of the success of East Asia, of which Japan is a part. I cited the story simply because I thought that it must contain a valuable clue which could serve as a useful

reference for us in addressing the issue of development.

What is the clue, then? After a thorough study, the World Bank came to the conclusion that this had been achieved through vigorous investment, sustained by a high savings rate and the availability of highly skilled human capital. I agree that vigorous investment was a powerful engine for growth. But what is noteworthy here is that the major portion of that investment capital came from the accumulation of small amounts of money saved by people with low incomes who believed in a better future.

The availability of many men and women with basic education must have been another vital factor. This was possible in part because many mothers were willing to skip lunch in order to pay for the education of their children. It is those vivid, concrete human factors that, in my view, have played a major role in achieving this success.

Of course, I do not deny the important, complementary role which donors and overseas investors played in their development. In view of the tremendous handicap that many developing countries have and in the light of the increasing interdependence of States, assistance by donors has become all the more important.

It is fortunate that we were able to agree on the Millennium Development Goals in this respect. However, it is crucial that we keep reminding ourselves that these goals could lose much of their relevance unless there are many who are prepared to run, sweating and short of breath, towards those goals, and unless an equal number are prepared to cheer and to give warm encouragement, supply water and towels to those serious runners, or ensure that the course is in good condition.

In this respect, Japan welcomes the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the establishment of the African Union as manifestations of the ownership of the process by African countries. Anticipating that African countries will strive to make further progress in their development on the basis of NEPAD, and to help strengthen their partnership with the international community, Japan will convene the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III) in October 2003.

Development must be pursued in a sustainable manner. It is therefore important duly to follow up the results of the Johannesburg Summit. For example, the Summit's Plan of Implementation recommended that the General Assembly consider declaring a "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" starting in 2005. Japan is in favour of this recommendation. Japan, for its part, will host the Third Water Forum and its International Ministerial Conference in March of next year.

The treatment of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases is another major task. As the report by the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health of the World Health Organization (WHO) pointed out last December, public health is critical for the economic development of poor countries, and investment in the health sector is a means not only of improving health conditions but also of achieving the Millennium Development Goals with respect to poverty reduction.

In order to address the issue of infectious diseases effectively, it is necessary to adopt a well-coordinated approach that responds to the wide-ranging needs of each country, including education, prevention, treatment, public sanitation, and research and development. Cooperation based on balanced consideration to regions in need of assistance is also important. From this viewpoint, Japan will continue to contribute to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Last but not least, I would like to address the need to strengthen the United Nations. The United Nations must focus on the new challenges of the twenty-first century and take action in a flexible and more effective manner. The priority issues which the United Nations is expected to address are being defined by the Millennium Declaration and through global conferences. It is up to the United Nations to establish work programmes and formulate budgets in accordance with these priorities, and then to undertake organizational reforms. The report on United Nations reform recently issued by the Secretary-General clearly sets forth the direction which this effort should take. Japan welcomes the basic stance of the Secretary-General and intends fully to cooperate in the process of reform.

A large number of heads of State and Government noted at the Millennium Summit that Security Council reform is especially important in

strengthening the United Nations. As the Secretary-General stated in his recent report, no reform can be complete without Security Council reform. I welcome his exhortation to Member States to move ahead in the discussion of this important issue. As the debate on Security Council reform is about to enter its tenth year, Japan believes that we should focus our discussion on such questions as the number of seats on an enlarged Security Council. Japan intends to make various efforts in this regard and hopes that the present report will provide momentum to the discussions.

The Japanese Government also welcomes the fact that the reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations, which is based on the Brahimi report, is showing increasing results. Japan looks forward to the efficient and effective use of the enhanced capacity of the Secretariat in this area.

It is important that we not view the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration simply as ends in themselves. By 2015, we must reduce world poverty and hunger by half, eliminate gender disparity in education and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. Thus, we can build a more peaceful, prosperous and just world and to that end, developing and developed countries are equally required to do their utmost according to their respective capacities. Japan will spare no effort to contribute to the work of the United Nations in attaining the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

Mr. Simonovic (Republic of Croatia): The issue of peace and security was our foremost concern in the past year and remains so today. Our common vision, embodied in the Millennium Declaration for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, in which all human beings can live better and safer lives is, unfortunately, still distant. In this respect, some positive developments have been forthcoming as a result of our joint action.

The fight against terrorism has also brought about some positive results. The situation in Afghanistan is improving, although not sufficiently. We welcome once more Timor-Leste to the United Nations family, and applaud the persistent struggle for independence of its people.

What we should learn from these examples is that, working together, through multilateral cooperation can make a difference. As the Secretary-General stated at the 2nd meeting of the current session,

> "When countries work together in multilateral institutions — developing, respecting, and when necessary enforcing international law — they also develop mutual trust and more effective cooperation on other issues."

That is why the United Nations was important in the past, and remains so, now more then ever. In the globalized and increasingly mutually dependent world, serious threats to world peace and security, such as the situation with Iraq, require our joint efforts. Croatia strongly supports the implementation of all the resolutions and decisions of the Security Council on Iraq. We hope that the United Nations will also have a leading role in resolving problems in another area of concern — the Middle East.

United Nations activities should be realigned with the Millennium Development Goals and the outcome of major international conferences. We all agree that time has come for implementation and tangible results. As I have already warned in my capacity as President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, we should not measure the success of our work by the number of resolutions we pass, but by the difference we make on the ground: that is, in the lives and future prospects of people who are hungry, have no access to medication, and suffer from conflict or extreme poverty.

To date, the progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been too slow and uneven. In some regions, such as East Asia and the Pacific, extreme income poverty has been reduced, but others, especially sub-Saharan Africa, are falling behind. Hunger is still a major problem for a number of countries. Universal primary education, particularly education for girls, is a goal still to be reached. However, the most horrific problem is high child mortality, with millions of children dying each year from diseases that could be prevented if there are resources available. For many countries fighting a losing battle with HIV-AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, the establishment of the Global Fund to help national efforts is a welcoming breakthrough, and a source of new hope.

Although we cannot be satisfied with trends, most countries still have a chance to meet the Millennium Development Goals in the remaining 13 years, but they cannot do it alone. We have to build on Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg to reach these Goals and

to make globalization work for all. To this end, we need to encourage building partnerships at global, national and regional levels, and include the private sector and non-governmental organizations. Strong feeling of ownership of the countries fighting for their development is key to their success. In this regard, we particularly welcome the New Partnership for Development in Africa (NEPAD).

If we really want to accomplish the difficult tasks in front of us, the United Nations must work together. Coherent and efficient policies, which can only be achieved by constantly improving coordination among main United Nations bodies and agencies, funds and programmes, are of utmost significance. To this end the further strengthening of the General Assembly and enhancing the Economic and Social Council is of interest to everyone. The spring meeting of ECOSOC with Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization should become a forum where stock is taken of what has been done and new policies are set. Cooperation between the two brings benefits to all. ECOSOC brings into this partnership more representative participation of States, and inclusion of the private sector and non-governmental organizations, which are important in strengthening the credibility of global economic decision-making. On the other hand, ECOSOC, through its cooperation with Bretton Woods institutions becomes more influential.

In our efforts to contribute to a safer and more prosperous world, our special attention should be devoted to the countries emerging from conflict. There is an urgent need to bridge the gap between humanitarian and developmental aid and also to ensure that post-conflict development is based on sound economic and social policies integrated into the development plans of the concerned country itself. To this end, ECOSOC has adopted a resolution which provides for the establishment of an ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict. We are right now in the process of establishing such a group on Guinea-Bissau.

The Republic of Croatia welcomes and continues to support the valuable work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and that of the Commission on Human Rights. In today's globalized world, promotion and protection of human rights, based on universal values, are our common tasks. The progress that has been made in this respect is obvious, but there is still a lot to be done. As was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, it is especially important to include human rights into all activities of the United Nations, including activities relating to the rule of law, sustainable development, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building.

During this time that we are fighting against terrorism, and for the sake of the values we stand for, we must be particularly sensitive to the protection of human rights. No fight for protection of national security can be fought at the expense of human rights. It is by promoting greater respect for human rights, along with development, democracy and social justice, that we will contribute to the prevention of terror.

International instruments for the protection of basic human rights, and punishment of their gravest violations, are — although not without challenges — gathering strength. The ever-increasing number of States Parties to the Rome Statute, Croatia being among them, demonstrates the commitment of the international community to end the culture of impunity and selective justice through the establishment of a permanent, universal court which would try the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, irrespective of their status or nationality.

The entry into force of the Rome Statute in an unprecedentedly short time was an achievement in itself. However, new challenges have arisen with the recent debate on the scope of the Court's jurisdiction with regard to non-Parties. For very pragmatic reasons, in the short run, it might be rational to search for a compromise; however, in the long run, the clear solution is universal participation in the Rome Statute.

In conclusion, the Government of Croatia fully supports the Secretary-General's efforts in realizing his vision of an overall program of reforming the United Nations. World leaders, heads of State and Government, who were gathered here two years ago at the Millennium Summit, reaffirmed their faith in the Organization. We believe that, besides the "housekeeping reform" that is going on, the United Nations requires major improvement and reform to successfully meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Croatia is ready to actively support such efforts.

The Nobel Prize awarded to the United Nations was fully deserved. It should encourage us only to do more.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization (A/57/1) over the past year. We also thank him for the informative report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/57/270).

As aptly observed by the Secretary-General, the political and security landscape of the world stands mixed, rather than satisfactory. The objectives embodied in the Millennium Declaration appear as a distant aspiration. But we should not lose hope, since experience has shown that when concerted and united actions are taken, the goals are more achievable. Nowhere is this more evident than in the joint efforts of the international community, under the auspices of the United Nations, for attaining stability and democracy in such nations as East Timor, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. These successes and others certainly offer a compelling source of gratification and achievement.

At the same time, heightened tensions in some corners of the globe continue to be of grave concern to us. This has resulted in conflict prevention becoming an important priority item for consideration. My delegation considers the ongoing endeavours undertaken by United Nations specialized agencies, programmes and funds to integrate a conflict prevention perspective into their activities to be an encouraging development. The Secretary-General's dedicated work in this regard, including his good offices and the contributions by his special representatives assigned to conflict areas, deserve our appreciation. My delegation also appreciates the Secretary-General's expressed willingness to assist and support all efforts aimed at fostering inter-Korean reconciliation through dialogue.

Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September, the international community has been united in taking concerted action to fight terrorism. In particular, the Security Council has played a crucial role in leading the international efforts to combat terrorism through its Counter-Terrorism Committee and Sanctions Committee on Afghanistan. We further believe that the Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism, established at the initiative of the Secretary-General, will serve as a reinforcing factor for the Organization's fight against terrorism.

In the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, the lack of progress in multilateral forums in the past year should not deter us from our efforts to address the issues of global security. We look forward to working with the international community to achieve the universality of, and adherence to, existing multilateral arms control agreements. We also believe that a regional approach has a great deal to contribute to this goal, especially if such endeavours are harnessed effectively and take into consideration the specific concerns of a region.

Regarding peacekeeping, my delegation takes note of the continuing efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance its capacity in the field of planning, management and support of peacekeeping operations. We have always regarded United Nations peacekeeping as vital to ensuring peace and stability in areas of strife around the world, and the Republic of Korea will take a more active role in these crucial activities in the years to come.

Time and again, we witness the increasing interrelationship between the problems of conflict, poverty and underdevelopment. That being said, my delegation regards the United Nations initiatives in development, including the Millennium Development Goals, to be of utmost importance. During the past year, the international community, developed and developing countries alike, reaffirmed their commitments in Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg, to share the responsibilities and the benefits of development for all humankind. Now it is time for the international community to work together in a spirit of cooperation to achieve tangible progress.

Of equal importance is the need to pay increasing attention to the vast disparities among many regions in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, as the Secretary-General has rightly underscored. Given that Africa lags behind in most of the targeted areas, we are pleased to note the concrete action taken in the field of African development, especially with the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the creation of the African Union. As reflected in the high-level plenary meeting on African development, on 16 September 2002, NEPAD should be welcomed as a dynamic African development initiative. In this regard, coordinated efforts of the United Nations system would contribute to the success of these initiatives.

In the twenty-first century, development is very much linked to information and communication technologies (ICT). Against this backdrop, the high-level meeting devoted to ICT for development, held at the United Nations in June 2002, was an important forum to reaffirm the multi-stakeholder approach of Member States, the private sector, civil society and the United Nations, all of which have a role to play in bridging the digital divide within and among countries. Thus, the momentum created should be followed up, aiming at making ICT a priority in development strategies.

Human rights has never been on a firmer foundation than in the present era, thanks in large measure to this global body. It should be acknowledged as one of the meaningful achievements of the United Nations that it could mobilize the will and action of the countries of the world to elaborate an increasingly robust and comprehensive legal regime of human rights protection and promotion. The latest addition to the body of international law for human rights have been the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2000 and the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court in July this year. The Republic of Korea appreciates the efforts of the United Nations to assist and protect refugees, displaced persons and others in need of international protection as a result of hunger, natural disaster, war and disease. The global consultations undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees was an important milestone, reaffirming the enduring importance of the Convention and the 1967 Protocol, as well as highlighting the need to strengthen the system in favour of the protection of refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR. We look forward to cooperating further with Member States in support of the efforts of UNHCR to strengthen the international protection system.

The urgent need for international cooperation in the fight against AIDS has become a priority for this world body. Millions of people throughout the world are infected with the disease with little hope of survival. My delegation would like to recall the commitment made in the Millennium Declaration, by which the international community resolved to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. We regard the focus in the Secretary-General's report this year to be most timely, as it calls for innovative action on all fronts.

Last but not least, we share the concerns of the Secretary-General that the progress achieved so far in implementing the goals of the Millennium Declaration have fallen far short of our expectations. In this regard, we acknowledge the value of the campaign launched recently by the Secretary-General. Ultimately, a successful outcome will depend on the collective efforts of all Member States to fulfil their commitments. For its part, the Republic of Korea will join in the effort to translate the goals into reality.

Mr. Clodumar (Nauru): My delegation would like at the outset to congratulate the Secretary-General and all those who contributed to the preparation of the two reports for the comprehensiveness and clarity of those reports, which deal with how effectively or otherwise the United Nations system has converted rhetoric and undertakings into tangible outcomes.

It was only two years ago that our leaders celebrated the dawn of the new millennium with an extraordinary summit, here in the Assembly. It was a historic moment, celebrated with zeal, as it laid out a path for greater cooperation in our collective vision for a more prosperous future. The very first annual report on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, which is before us today, reminds us all of these aspirations and catalogues the progress achieved to date.

Consistent with the ideal of meeting our commitments, Nauru has been working with the Pacific Islands Forum, the regional organizations and our development partners to develop regional strategies and frameworks that will enable us to implement, collectively and individually, measures that are practical and acceptable to our communities.

The 1992 Honiara Declaration, the 2000 Biketawa Declaration and the 2002 Nasonini Declaration provide the States members of the Forum with the framework for strengthening regional cooperation within and outside the region on matters relating to peace and security. Those declarations called for concrete domestic action in specific areas, such as the introduction of domestic laws to address money-laundering, terrorism and transnational crime. In the case of Nauru, however, little progress has been

made in the implementation of these undertakings, mainly because of resource constraints.

Nauru, together with most, if not all, of the Pacific island countries, has done all that is necessary to keep the subregion safe from nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction and toxic waste by ratifying regional and international instruments, such as the Treaty of Rarotonga, the Convention of Waigani, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, to name just a few.

It is regrettable, however, that our many calls for States that have nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction to respect our desires are ignored. The problem may well be one of attitude. Some of the nuclear-weapon States consider themselves to be the "good guys" and believe that they should not be pestered with such commitments, whereas those they classify as either "bad" or "evil" should be bound. Secondly, those same nuclear-weapon States consider the safety and security of their own countries and people to be paramount, even at the expense of neighbouring regions and their peoples. The development of "star wars" weapons can only reinforce such thinking.

My country, like many others, was also quick to ratify the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court, even though the Statute has no direct relevance for us. We nonetheless acted on it because we wanted the instrument to be ratified and come into force and because we believe that establishing the Court will provide a mechanism against impunity in regions of conflict, thereby contributing to the undertakings under parts I and II of the Millennium Declaration. Again, it is regrettable to see those States that have expressed reservations about the Court intent on making the institution impotent and preventing it from achieving its purposes, even going so far as to state that the Court is a threat to peace and security.

Nauru agrees that good governance should be an integral part of economic and social development programmes and national development plans, and we are now increasingly looking at ways to improve and strengthen our law enforcement mechanisms to make them more effective. We are also encouraged by the increasing participation of non-governmental organizations and the private sector in governance issues. Again, my country, in consultation with the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat, is taking the necessary steps to implement the relevant regional policies on law enforcement, governance and accountability.

The themes in the report on the prevention of armed conflict and the treatment and the prevention of diseases, including HIV/AIDS, are particularly relevant. Nauru recognizes that health and education are fundamental building blocks for society, but without peace they become secondary issues when it comes to the allocation of resources. We are somewhat fortunate in our region on this score, as the report's statistical annex shows that in terms of the major Millennium targets, the Pacific enjoys fairly high socio-economic indicators. But our regional efforts in maintaining and improving such standards requires continued support from the international community, particularly the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization. To date, their support has been inconsistent and ad hoc, but the Millennium Development Goals fortunately provide a centralized and coordinated framework for assistance.

Small as it may be, Nauru is pleased to have contributed to the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS. However, it is sad to note that donor funding for the fund is still limited, and that there remains a shortfall of some $7 billion. The way forward will require continuing bold and innovative action on all fronts by all stakeholders, and I would urge the Secretary-General to keep up the good fight.

Nauru endorses the strong emphasis on integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes. For us, one of the most important goals of the Declaration was the commitment in part III to address the special needs of small island developing States within the framework of the Barbados Programme of Action. We continue to advocate such a framework, but call for an even stronger global response to emerging global problems, such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity. The recent World Summit on Sustainable Development developed a Plan of Implementation that goes some way towards achieving a concerted global response, but

here again all of us will have to take strong action to meet the commitments made on the environment and on sustainable development in general.

With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization, I do not wish to raise any substantively different issues because I believe that the two documents are inextricably linked and can ultimately be fused into a single, coherent and integrated summary of the work of the United Nations, with a focus on the achievement of the Millennium Declaration Goals.

I would, however, refer to chapter VIII of document A/57/270, on strengthening the United Nations, which I believe does not adequately show the depth of the change that the Organization has undergone. The ongoing reforms will help to meet the goals of the Millennium Declaration concerning the administration of this great body and I commend the Secretary-General and his staff for the work done to date. But, of course, we should not stop here. For the Organization to continue to play its envisioned role effectively, we need to continue efforts to revitalize and streamline our work, including restructuring the core United Nations bodies — such as the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and even the regional groupings — to better reflect new geopolitical realities, as well as to address emerging global issues.

The United Nations is an imperfect institution that has its limitations, but the fact is that the main concerns of the body are of relevance to all nations and affect our lives. The agenda of this Organization grows each year and every Member State has a stake in ensuring that it continues to strive to achieve its objectives. The only way for the United Nations to succeed in its lofty goal is for us to remain strongly committed to the road map we adopted at the Millennium Summit.

Mr. Jalang'o (Kenya): Allow me at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization during the past year. The report provides us with abundant information for debate on the item under review.

The Millennium Summit held here in New York in September 2000 was a historic event aimed at dealing comprehensively with the major problems affecting mankind. At that important Summit, our leaders collectively resolved on a common vision for a peaceful, just and prosperous world. It is therefore appropriate for us at this juncture to conscientiously look back and reflect on the progress we have made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

As stated by the Secretary-General in the first annual report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, given current trends the prospects of meeting the Millennium Development Goals are decidedly mixed, with marked differences between and within regions. My delegation notes with concern that progress in much of sub-Saharan Africa is hardly advancing at all, with dramatic fallback in some of the critical target areas, such as poverty reduction.

Allow me to inform the Assembly of the actions that Kenya has taken towards the implementation of the Goals. We have set up a national task force comprising representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Planning, the United Nations system, bilateral partners, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to spearhead the mobilization of national response, strengthen coordination among stakeholders to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and prioritize the necessary development interventions and assistance required. The task force will also advise on the linkages between the Millennium Development Goals and other national planning tools. We look forward to the preparation of our first national report on the Millennium Development Goals at the end of this year.

The proportion of people living on less than $1 a day, as well as those suffering from hunger and malnutrition, has continued to rise. This situation is more severe in sub-Saharan Africa, where almost half of the population lives below the poverty line.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has further aggravated the situation. HIV/AIDS has increased demands on public health services and education, lowered labour productivity and affected the supply of skilled work force. The pandemic has also eroded the gains that had been made in the education of children and in child and maternal mortality. Kenya therefore urges the speedy implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and especially the mobilization of additional resources for the Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Developing countries continue to carry a heavy debt burden. Debt-servicing obligations, accompanied by declining levels of official development assistance,

have resulted in a net outflow of financial resources from developing to developed countries. This has impacted negatively on the ability of developing countries to provide essential services, such as education and health, and hence on the achievement of targets set in those critical social sectors.

The era of multilateral trade arrangements has disadvantaged rather than benefited most developing countries. Developed-country markets remain totally inaccessible to the products of developing countries due to tariff and non-tariff barriers, such as subsidies, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards, among others. Primary commodities, a major export of developing countries, continue to fetch lower prices in the world markets. These challenges have inhibited the ability of our countries to finance their own development.

We recognize the important role of regional economic integration as a vehicle to peace, stability and development. The recent launching of the African Union by our leaders is evidence of the commitment to putting the African people on the path to sustainable development. African leaders are committed to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a programme of the African Union, as a tool for economic, social and political development. However, if NEPAD objectives are to become a reality, we need the unfailing commitment and support of Africans themselves, as well as of the international community.

We are convinced that Africa has the capacity to resolve the conflicts that have continued to reverse developmental gains on the continent. Those conflicts have been one of the factors contributing to the proliferation of small arms in Africa. At a recent meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, held in Nairobi last August, on the occasion of the First Ministerial Review Conference of the Nairobi Declaration, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to combat and to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In order to achieve that objective on a sustainable basis, there is need for financial, technical and political support from the international community. Kenya would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, the Netherlands, Safer World of the United Kingdom and Safer World of South Africa for the assistance they have extended in the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration.

Kenya believes that the recent peace initiatives in southern Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola are significant signals and are a source of hope for peace and stability in the continent. We reiterate the important role of the regional organizations in conflict resolutions, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. In this regard, Kenya calls for the strengthening of regional and subregional bodies such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development and the Southern Africa Development Community in recognition of their contribution to peace.

In conclusion, it is evident that the Millennium Development Goals may not be achievable at the present rate of implementation. There is no doubt that a much larger effort is needed from all actors — in true global partnership — in the mobilization of financial resources to fund the implementation of those goals. The United Nations and the international community have over the years accumulated a wealth of experience and policy frameworks to deal with the problems highlighted in the Millennium Declaration. The commitments of the United Nations conferences of the 1990s, the special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly on HIV/AIDS and on Children, the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, if honoured and effectively implemented, can put us on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): The objective assessment provided by the Secretary-General in the two reports under consideration brings us to a real moment of truth — a truth that may not be easy to accept but one that we must have the courage to take responsibility for.

Some of us might ask , what truth is that? I do not wish to repeat here all the conclusions of the Secretary-General. I will simply refer you to the key words that punctuate almost every passage of the reports under consideration by the Assembly: limited progress, insufficient progress, mixed results at best, very minor chances of attaining the established goals, and so on.

Who is responsible for this state of affairs? Why such slow progress fulfilling commitments that we all

made freely and voluntarily? What path should we take to correct this situation?

I do not think that we have to look far to identify those responsible. It is, simply, we the Member States — to different degrees, admittedly — but we must collectively accept responsibility for this.

We should, in this respect, recognize the tremendous efforts made by the Secretary-General in conducting the work of the Organization and in implementing the Millennium Declaration's objectives. I would also like specifically to commend his spirit of initiative and the relentless creativity that he demonstrates in this regard. It is in this spirit that we welcome with the greatest satisfaction his decision to launch the Millennium Campaign and to appoint, as its executive coordinator Mrs. Eveline Herfkens, who was active at Monterrey. We are also glad that Mr. Mark Mallock Brown, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, will be closely associated with this endeavour.

Nevertheless, the dedicated efforts of the Secretary-General cannot be sufficient in and of themselves, especially insofar as we have all failed so far to live up to our commitment to give the Organization the means to take effective action.

The path that leads in the right direction is no mystery. To achieve the Millennium Goals, the recipe remains the same: a global approach, a coordinated strategy, the mobilization of wills and necessary resources and the strengthening of the leading role of the United Nations.

I would like, in this respect, to reiterate the message that Tunisia delivered from this very rostrum during the general debate: let us work together to forge a pact of international partnership, based on a code of international conduct, that will engage all parties in the political, economic, development and the international security and stability domains.

I would now like to turn more specifically to three areas of the Millennium Declaration that are of particular importance in our eyes: peace and security, development and poverty eradication, and responding to the special needs of Africa.

With respect to peace and security, we recognize that the United Nations has made important progress in this field and can pride itself on its considerable success. It is still imperative, however, that the work of the United Nations and, particularly, of the Security Council, be further developed. The Council should treat all conflicts on an equal basis and with the necessary diligence. The Middle East, Somalia, and Liberia — which are but a few examples among many — deserve the same attention that the Council pays to the other questions on its agenda. The Security Council must collectively take charge of the Iraq question. I repeat, the Council must retain collective responsibility for the Iraqi question. We believe that Baghdad has responded positively and without restrictions to the return of the inspectors, and we welcome that. There is now room for a diplomatic settlement that will spare the world and the region.

On the Palestinian question, the Council, here again, must fully assume its role by enforcing its resolutions, to induce Israel ultimately to terminate its occupation of all the occupied territories and to return to the negotiating table. The Palestinians are committed to a political settlement that guarantees peace and co-existence between two States: Palestine and Israel.

The President took the Chair.

The purely and exclusively national interests of the member States of the Council should not serve as the basis for its decision-making, which is supposed to represent international conscience and legitimacy. The use of sanctions must be improved and regulated, in order to take into account humanitarian considerations and the provisions of Article 50 of the Charter. The members of the Council should accelerate their work in that regard.

However, the most urgent issue, in our view, is the refinement of our counter-terrorism strategy. It seems clear to us that, without a genuine global approach that would focus fully on the root causes of that phenomenon, particularly those of a social and economic nature, the global campaign against terrorism would not have a good chance of succeeding. It also seems equally imperative to us to establish, as soon as possible, the appropriate legal framework, under United Nations auspices, by concluding a comprehensive convention on terrorism that would include a precise and universally acceptable definition of the concept of terrorism. The sooner that is done, the better.

Secondly, regarding development and poverty eradication — this is the Millennium Declaration topic in which there has been the least progress, if any at all

can be shown. As indicated by the Secretary-General, the situation has worsened in certain regions, notably in Africa. Paradoxically, however, that issue has dominated the agenda of the international community over the past two years. In Doha, Monterrey, Bali and Johannesburg, that question was examined from every angle and in all its dimensions and ramifications. The Secretary-General's conclusions are truly disquieting.

Admittedly, we still have the next 14 years to catch up, but in order to do that, we must take action and honour the commitments made, because, as far as we are concerned, what is involved here are commitments made at the highest level. They are not mere aspirations or wishful thinking, as some might wish to think. In failing to address that challenge within the fixed time frame, those who have not fulfilled their obligations must assume the heavy responsibility of having further fuelled the root causes of all the ills from which our world suffers.

The margin for manoeuvre to achieve the Millennium Declaration Goals, which are a high priority, is fairly broad. We have institutional and legal frameworks that are already in place. We must make the effort to invest in concrete action. Here again Tunisia has made its contribution through the initiative of its President, His Excellency Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, which is aimed at establishing a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication. The creation of that fund was called for by the Johannesburg Summit, and we hope that the General Assembly will endorse that decision.

Thirdly, regarding meeting the special needs of Africa, when our heads of State and Government identified that area as an area for priority action, they did so rightly, not expecting that the achievements in the area would be so slight and disappointing. Africa remains the continent that is the least stable, the poorest, the most needy and the hardest hit by the most devastating epidemics. Admittedly, Africans themselves are taking charge of their own problems and have committed themselves to that end in the most vigorous terms; for instance, by launching the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Union.

But does that mean that the international community's responsibility for the African continent is thereby reduced? Definitely not. On the contrary, we believe that the international community, with all its components and mechanisms, must redouble its efforts and pledge itself today, before it is too late, to assist in Africa's recovery. Such international assistance must be provided in a way that responds to the priorities identified by Africans themselves, and should not be tied to pre-conditions that are not related to the demands of the African reality. We also believe that it is necessary to strengthen coordination and consultation with regional and subregional African organizations, which are in the best position to identify Africa's real needs and their appropriate responses.

The debate on the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization and the implementation of the Millennium Declaration is an opportunity for genuine self-criticism, with a view to generating real momentum to honour the words of our heads of State and Government, who have shown us the path towards a better world.

For its part, Tunisia will continue to devote itself to meeting its obligations, and will maintain and reinforce, as needed, its cooperation with all multilateral institutions, as well as with its regional partners, in order to make the Millennium Declaration Goals a reality, instead of simply a collection of promises and good intentions doomed never to be translated into action.

Mr. Nambiar (India): My delegation wishes to congratulate the President on the skilful way in which he has been conducting the work of this session. We thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive overview provided to us of the activities of the Organization over the past year in various areas. The report also highlights many major challenges ahead of us. Since time is limited, I shall refer to only a few. To save time, I shall also skip some paragraphs in the circulated text.

The Secretary-General has reminded us of the need to renew our faith in United Nations-centred multilateralism. The terrorist attacks of 11 September last year demonstrated that the phenomenon of terrorism can be tackled only through a multilateral approach. No country is immune to terrorism and no country can tackle it alone. While reminding us of the clear interest and responsibility of all States to uphold international law and maintain international order, the Secretary-General, in his address, also calls upon States to agree to the exercise of sovereignty together in order to gain a hold over problems that defeat each

separately. We take those words as a powerful message pointing to the global challenges facing us today that demand action and solutions that acquire legitimacy when tackled through multilateral cooperative efforts.

Admittedly, the credibility of the world Organization rests upon its ability to impart momentum or dynamism to the peace processes in areas of tension or potential conflict around the world. In this, the Organization has generally worked with deliberation and discretion. In Afghanistan, the Afghan parties were brought together in Bonn in December 2001, under United Nations auspices, and were able to agree on a political process that has now led to the establishment of a transitional authority under President Karzai. After years of conflict, there now appears a promising, but tenuous, prospect for peace. In the Middle East the United Nations has given cautious support to the actions of the Quartet, of which it is a constituent. Implied in this approach is the recognition by the United Nations of the need for a sophisticated and differentiated approach to the many problems that beset the world today.

In his statement introducing his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General referred to the situation in South Asia, stating that it remains perilous and that the underlying causes must be addressed. In our view, the underlying causes are cross-border terrorism and the unwillingness of concerned establishments in our neighbourhood to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism, which has been nurtured over almost two decades. Other underlying causes include a policy of compulsive hostility, the absence of democratic governance and the unwillingness of a military establishment to subject itself to civilian control. It is only when these underlying causes are addressed that the commonalities between the nation-building interests of the peoples of the subcontinent can be rediscovered and that the problem areas in the relationship between the countries can be addressed and resolved. The Secretary-General has wisely chosen to exhort both parties in South Asia to resume bilateral dialogue and to resolve differences through peaceful means. In our view, apart from being the only viable option, the bilateral route is also the route to which both countries remain formally committed.

Efforts to sidetrack this essential premise were at the root of the so-called nuclear scare in the region a few months ago. We do not deny the severity of the political tensions that were generated in the subcontinent as a result of the mindless acts of terrorism perpetrated against important symbols of Indian democracy and nationhood. The measures adopted by the Government of India were deliberate but restrained, as would befit a responsible democracy accountable to its people. As mentioned by the Secretary-General himself, the efforts of some well-placed Member States did contribute to a temporary easing of the overall situation based, on express commitments to end cross-border infiltrations permanently. But, again, those commitments remain unimplemented or have been backtracked upon.

Within the United Nations system, the artificial scare created recently by declaring a phase-III emergency or security alert covering United Nations personnel in India was not without its whimsical sidelights. Family members of United Nations staff members in New York vacationing in India at official expense were forced to displace themselves from India, at further official expense, to hotels in Thailand for periods extending for weeks. Whatever the implications that may have had for the expenses borne by the Organization, for India this development provided a telling insight into the political judgment and evaluative capacities of the United Nations Secretariat at senior levels in the political and security divisions.

India has been consistently and totally committed to the cause of United Nations peacekeeping. That commitment is unwavering and undiminished, and will continue. India has contributed more than 60,000 troops and police personnel to 35 United Nations peacekeeping operations, with 109 Indian peacekeepers having made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the United Nations. We have also pledged a brigade under the United Nations Standby Arrangements System, as well as 60 officers to the on-call list for a generic mission headquarters. Overall, we have been among the largest contributors of troops, having participated in almost every major peacekeeping operation. We therefore speak with considerable knowledge and from a wealth of accumulated experience, with the intent of strengthening United Nations peacekeeping practice and procedure and making peacekeeping operations more efficient and effective.

While recognizing the progress made in improving the management of peace operations, some problems remain. In paragraph 53 of his report, the

Secretary-General refers to the shortage of peacekeepers. In his report, Mr. Brahimi observed that 70 per cent of troop contributions come from developing countries. This is untenable, and reflects poorly on the commitment of those who have a special responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. The lack of political will among certain Member States detracts from the universal character of United Nations peacekeeping operations. They also lay themselves open to the charge of double standards, whereby they are prepared to contribute to operations in Europe but are reluctant to do so in Africa. This commitment gap needs to be addressed.

We welcome the attention paid by the Secretary-General to the issue of terrorism in his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Terrorism, as is so rightly stated in the report, threatens sovereignty, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the other principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Given the horrific dimensions it has assumed, it represents a central challenge for the international community today.

Terrorism seeks immunity for itself by invoking arguments about its root causes. Those arguments provide it with licence for attempting to disrupt democratic processes and for killing civilians, including women and children. Terrorism also draws sustenance and justification from those who say that while acts of terrorism by groups should be condemned, they should not be outlawed. We have heard arguments to the effect that freedom struggles should not be de-legitimized by efforts to link them to terrorism. We would argue that terrorism should not be legitimized by pseudo-justifications on the grounds of the so-called freedom struggles within independent nations.

Terrorists are often harboured by States. They are financed, trained, armed and provided sanctuary by them. The first and foremost requirement, if we are to make any progress in the fight against terrorism, would be to focus on groups known to perpetuate terrorism and on States known to sponsor them. We have welcomed the creation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee by the Security Council. We look forward to a meaningful contribution by the Committee to the fight against terrorism. That would go a long way towards the preservation of international peace and security.

India has been a victim of State-sponsored, cros border terrorism for almost two decades now, with toll in the tens of thousands. The most recent terror attack, at a place of worship in Gujarat, left a trail death and destruction in its wake. The people of t state of Jammu and Kashmir demonstrated their resol to exercise electoral rights to choose the representatives, despite attempts to undermine the san by a campaign of intimidation and terror inspire instigated and executed from across the border. Th people of Jammu and Kashmir, in the tradition of democratic societies, have defied such provocation and chosen to adhere to the democratic path. This ma not be palatable to those who, despite their occasion lapses into democracy, are unaccustomed to the valu of tolerance, pluralism and respect for diversity th characterize a truly democratic political culture.

India, along with other developing countrie attaches the highest importance to the achievement the Millennium Development Goals. The Monterre Conference and the Johannesburg Summit were to ha provided the means for achieving those Goals. Whi their outcomes were encouraging in many ways, th have fallen short of the level of commitment requir from the international community. There nevertheless a need to move ahead and translate th commitments that we have undertaken into concre action. We are acutely aware that we have now only years to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

We find that the section of the report on th implementation of the Millennium Declaration dealin with human rights, democracy and good governanc focuses nearly exclusively on internation conventions, legal frameworks and world conference This is disappointing, as selective solutions that rel exclusively on strengthening the legal order for th promotion of human rights or on enforcement-minde approaches to redress human rights grievances b themselves contribute little to any durable culture human rights. We are also surprised that the sam section of the report makes no reference to th usurpation of power by militaries or to its perpetuatio through legal framework orders. In our view, this has bearing on the subject of democracy, good governanc and human rights.

We welcome the global campaign regarding th Millennium Development Goals that has been initiate by the Secretary-General, as well as the appointment Ms. Eveline Herfkens as its Executive Coordinato

The Zedillo High-Level Group has estimated that an additional $50 billion in official development assistance alone is required if the Goals are to be met. The Millennium Development Goals were not adopted in a meeting of the G-77. They were adopted by a Summit held in the United Nations, and are contained in the Millennium Declaration, which represents a global compact bringing together all Member States, developed and developing. We would, in this context, urge country-level reporting on official development assistance, debt relief and market access for our developed partners as well. Such reports should help to foster and focus public debate in developed countries, re-energize a broad political constituency in favour of development and create the necessary links between national priorities and targets assumed at the global level. It is only by having country-level reporting on the fulfilment of pledges undertaken by developed countries that the Secretary-General's campaign can be truly global.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the continuous efforts of the United Nations system to respond to humanitarian crises. In Afghanistan, in particular, the United Nations system has demonstrated its ability to quickly and effectively face up to the most daunting challenges. The United Nations Development Programme is playing a leading role in meeting humanitarian, recovery and rehabilitation requirements. The United Nations Children's Fund has supported the back-to-school campaign which has ensured that 3 million children have returned to school. The World Food Programme has launched one of its largest relief programmes in Afghanistan, providing the difference between starvation and survival.

We commend the United Nations system for these achievements. We hasten, however, to strike a note of caution. The Secretary-General has often reminded us of what happens when a crisis stops attracting media attention. We must not allow that to happen in Afghanistan as that would have a bearing on the credibility the United Nations system enjoys in the field of humanitarian assistance.

We are happy to note the support provided by the United Nations system for the development of Africa. The findings of the independent review, commissioned by the Secretary-General on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa, will be a useful guide when we consider the support that the international community should provide to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We are happy that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has already initiated a joint programme with NEPAD. The United Nations system should work closely with African Governments and its support to NEPAD should be Africa-driven. Any deviation would only be seen as an attempt to impose an external agenda. This, we hope, will not happen.

Mr. Mmualefe (Botswana): Let me begin by expressing the appreciation of my delegation to the United Nations Secretary-General for his comprehensive, concise and insightful report on the Follow-up to the Outcome of the Millennium Summit, which he introduced to the General Assembly last week.

The report focuses attention on very important issues of our time. These were discussed by world leaders during the Millennium Summit, where they adopted the Millennium Declaration, setting out clear goals and commitments as well as targets for attaining them.

The Secretary-General's report gives a good account of accomplishments by, and shortcomings of, the United Nations and its Member States in pursuit of the Millennium Goals. Through the report, the Secretary-General also provides invaluable insights on what could be done to achieve progress. This is indeed an important first step, which requires the support of the international community so that it does not become an end in itself but a catalyst for more concerted effort.

The challenges facing humanity are as varied as they are complex, and require concerted individual and global responses — and what a better place to start than with the United Nations in cooperation with other stakeholders? After all, the United Nations is the only institution that can effectively foster partnership, cooperation and multilateralism.

The challenges that face developing countries, particularly Africa, are even more daunting. These include the high level of poverty, which is exacerbated by the unfavourable economic environment and conflicts, and compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The report's statistical analysis on the Millennium Development Goals paints a grim picture of Africa's performance with respect to various indicators,

compared to other regions where improvements have been taken place.

There is, however, no room for despair. Recent efforts of the United Nations and the international community give much hope that the challenges facing the continent can be successfully addressed. In particular, the recently held United Nations Conference on Financing for Development, which produced the Monterrey Consensus, is important in that it identified sources that can be used to finance the Millennium Development Goals. Among such sources are the following: The mobilization of domestic resources; the mobilization of external resources, including foreign direct investment; increased financial and technical cooperation, and the resolution of the debt crisis. We welcome the important step taken by the Secretary-General to initiate, within the United Nations, a Millennium campaign to place the Millennium Development Goals on the top of the agenda for global action.

The report of the Secretary-General gives prominence to the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has had very serious implications for economic and social progress in the world, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where there is very little capacity to deal with the problem, owing mainly to limited resources at the disposal of these countries. This necessarily requires more broad-based global approaches.

The Secretary-General's report offers useful insights on steps that can be taken to reverse the situation, including addressing stigma and discrimination; prevention; mobilizing global response; expanding access to care and treatment, and raising the required resources.

Despite the involvement of the United Nations, the donor community and other partners in providing resources for the fight against the pandemic, the resources are still inadequate to satisfactorily fund the response to HIV/AIDS. The challenge remains and requires much more to be done if the goal of halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases by the year 2015 is to be achieved.

The report of the Secretary-General deals as well with issues of conflict prevention and peace, security and disarmament. These are also at the heart of the United Nations agenda.

The consequences of failure on the part of the international community and the United Nations to prevent conflict in various parts of the world have been a loss of millions of lives, shattered economies and displacement of people. There is, therefore, a need to make a concerted efforts to prevent conflicts from breaking out in the first place. Such efforts should take cognizance of the fact that causes of conflict are multidimensional. The Secretary-General's report offers invaluable insights in this regard — that the responsibility lies with national governments to adopt equitable public policies and to ensure adherence to international humanitarian and human rights standards, and for such efforts to be supported by the United Nations, regional organizations, civil society and the private sector. We therefore look forward to the debate on the agenda item entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", where these issues will be examined in greater detail.

The cooperation arrangements between the United Nations and regional organizations need to be strengthened, for they have the potential for effective prevention of conflict, covering all regions of the world.

The world has not been spared from the scourge of terrorism. There is no alternative to forging strong partnerships in addressing that challenge. The events of 11 September 2001, while indeed regrettable, have given a new impetus to the international community's commitment to deal with the problem. The work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, established through Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), is worthy of the support and cooperation of Member States. But it is also important that the capacity problems faced by most developing countries be addressed in order to enable them to implement all required measures, as stipulated in the resolution.

We look forward to the further strengthening of the legal framework for the prevention and suppression of international terrorism by the United Nations, through the elaboration of a comprehensive and global convention on terrorism. We stand ready to contribute to that process. It is also important that as many Member States as possible ratify all existing conventions on terrorism.

In conclusion, I should like to add that the continent of Africa has recently taken a bold step to

ensure that it is united in facing the enormous challenges confronting it, through the establishment of the African Union, which has initiated the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The continent is committed to creating an environment conducive to economic growth and development. And the support and assistance of the international community, acting in partnership with Africa, is required for the initiative to succeed.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cyprus.

Mr. Moushoutas (Cyprus): The report before us, which, under provisions of the Charter, the Secretary-General is expected to submit yearly to the General Assembly, is relatively short — definitely shorter than that submitted last year — revealing, at first glance, the determination of the Secretary-General to cut down on paper use. We congratulate the Secretary-General on the preparation of the report. It is precise, easily readable and substantive.

We have noted the important changes that have taken place since 1997 and the resultant adaptation of the internal structure of the United Nations to the new challenges. The Millennium Declaration of two years ago, with its clear-cut priorities and time-bound goals, the improvements in peacekeeping operations, the priorities set in combating and eradicating poverty and HIV/AIDS, and the fruitful partnerships are all evidence of a strong trend for a creative international organization worthy of the vision of its founding fathers and of the trust bestowed upon it by mankind.

We fully agree with the Secretary-General that the need for a multilateral institution has never been more acutely felt than it is today, and we pledge our unequivocal support for his efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations. Strengthening the United Nations, the Organization entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, has been the cornerstone of our foreign policy. We earnestly believe that the Organization should have the necessary means — both political and economic — so that, as the Secretary-General said in a previous report, it will not let down those who trusted their fate to it. Therefore, it is high time that the collective system of security, as provided for by the Charter of the United Nations, be implemented and thus that the work of the founding fathers be finally completed.

We agree with the Secretary-General that there is a need for even more changes, including in the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Department of Public Information, and for the creation of an Office for the Global Compact as well as for the planning and servicing of meetings. Moreover, enhancing public information through special United Nations programmes and meaningful messages, referred to in the Secretary-General's report, will be especially useful in the task of strengthening the good relationship existing among the United Nations, diplomatic personnel and the citizens of our host city and country. The general United Nations membership — especially those associated with the Committee on Relations with the Host Country — would fully agree on that need. The United Nations, the report states, has a compelling story to tell. We echo that statement and express the hope that it may have the desired impact in the world at large and in our beloved host city of New York.

We welcome the progress achieved in making the working methods of the Security Council more transparent, and we again express the hope that the decade-old efforts of the Open-ended Working Group with regard to enlarging the Security Council will be agreed upon. An enlarged Security Council would be more democratic and thus more representative and effective. We agree with the Secretary-General that the proliferation of meetings and of official documents and reports is a source of problems for the general United Nations membership, especially the small delegations. Curtailment is therefore necessary with respect to documentation and meetings. We support the rationalization of the agenda of the General Assembly, provided that the new agenda serves the interests and the needs of the entire international community.

We also share the Secretary-General's view that the road to a better future is one of cooperation and partnership among States, as well as among the private and the civic sector, non-governmental organizations, institutions of learning and research, and others. The United Nations can guide those partnerships and unite their myriad efforts in pursuit of specific goals, such as those contained clearly, and on the basis of priorities, in the historic Millennium Summit Declaration. Creating a partnership office to guide and channel all activities within United Nations principles seems necessary to us, especially since the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals has, as the

Secretary-General informed us, fallen short of expectations.

Corporations and the private sector in general have much to contribute under the compact for partnership, and we welcome the appointment of an adviser in this domain.

Of special concern is the Secretary-General's assessment that on all of our broad objectives — human rights, democracy, good governance, the resolution of conflicts and the special needs of Africa — we are moving too slowly. We owe it to ourselves and to the credibility of the United Nations to move faster in implementing the commitments we have undertaken in the Millennium Declaration related to these most important objectives.

Finally, we wish to stress also the need for more efficient human resources management and for flexibility in using budget resources for those priority issues among the goals of the United Nations.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation has considered with interest the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (*A/57/1*), as well as the report on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit (*A/57/270*).

I should like at the outset to express our satisfaction at the contents of the two reports in terms of information. They not only review the steps that the United Nations is taking to assist in resolving international problems and in promoting cooperation in all areas, but they also reflect, boldly and candidly, all of the successes and failures of the United Nations and of its missions, and discuss what needs to be done to deal with grave international problems that require necessary resources as well as cooperation among all States.

In his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General reviews cases that reflect positive developments in the arena of international relations, particularly in Asia and Africa, and the new momentum produced by major international conferences. We share his view that peace and development are clear indicators of promising opportunities to consolidate security and stability in some of the areas he mentioned and to bring about peace in other areas that are still suffering from conflict and turmoil.

One of the reasons for our satisfaction is that, in cases where success seems elusive, the Secretary-General has expressed his determination to exert utmost efforts to face international challenges in the political, economic and environmental areas. We hope that he will work to resolve issues such as the increased level of poverty, the spread of disease, the deterioration of the environment and the decrease in growth rates, and that an end will be put to the Security Council's inability to deal with certain grave problems, such as increased tensions and conflicts and the continued usurpation and occupation of lands and the severe punishment of their inhabitants. The Secretary-General has stated clearly that, instead of moving towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the world seems to be backsliding towards more conflicts.

We believe that the Secretary-General speaks for all of us when he points out that terrorism threatens the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations. The international community must actively address this problem and its causes by reviewing what the United Nations has done in this area. Given the conclusions reached by international conferences, my delegation welcomes the determination of the Secretary-General to see that the Organization plays an even more vital role in combating terrorism. In particular, we would like to support his call on all countries that have not done so to accede to all conventions aimed at fighting terrorism and eliminating it. My country has acceded to all of the international and regional agreements in this area, and we have presented our original report and our complementary reports, in accordance with the requirements of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001).

We believe that putting an end to terrorism will require, first and foremost, uprooting it, and we must also avoid the use of double standards in dealing with it. Terrorism will not be eradicated through lone efforts by individual States or a group of States. Indeed, the Secretary-General has stated that the United Nations is the only forum that can give international legitimacy to the struggle against terrorism.

Along these lines, we think that it is absolutely wrong to link terrorism to one culture, religion or ethnicity, as some have done, and that it is unacceptable to describe as terrorism the struggle waged by certain peoples in self-defence or for

independence. The Organization must address these issues. We hope that we will arrive at an agreed text for a comprehensive convention to suppress international terrorism. We also call for the holding of a special session by the United Nations or an international conference devoted to the fight against terrorism that would address all of the motives behind and causes of terrorism as well as the means of eradicating them. To do so, we have to agree on a clear definition of politically and internationally rejected terrorism and delink it from legitimate struggles for independence and national liberation.

Dealing with the horrible phenomenon of terrorism should not distract us from the other issues mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report. We share his concern that we have not achieved what had been expected in the area of disarmament, in particular with respect to weapons of mass destruction. As long as these weapons exist, no one will have safety or security. We welcome cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations as well as the elaboration of joint strategies for the prevention and settlement of conflicts.

We look forward to progress in the reforms undertaken by the Secretary-General to coordinate the work of the Organization with that of other international bodies. We urge once again an equitable distribution among the nationals of the States members of the United Nations, and we also welcome the efforts made to bring about peace on the African continent, to consolidate security in African countries and to direct efforts towards development and stability.

We welcome the fact, noted in the report, that most African countries have registered impressive growth rates and recorded a decline in the rate of HIV/AIDS infection. Also important are the measures taken by the Secretary-General to meet the needs of the continent in terms of bringing about the African Union — something to which the continent had long aspired — thereby enabling all African countries to cope with the challenges that the continent faces.

My delegation welcomes the pledges and promises made at the high-level meeting on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It is important that all concerned partners cooperate with the African Union to achieve the objectives set out by NEPAD, which is led, owned and managed by the African Union; that they support all efforts to ease tensions and to work to eradicate hunger, poverty and disease; and that they help put an end to the draining by colonialist Powers of the wealth of the continent.

The issue of sanctions also is among those considered by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization. He underlines, among other things, that targeted sanctions can contribute to a general strategy of preventive diplomacy. This is true if all the provisions of the Charter are taken into account. However, sanctions should not be resorted to before peaceful means have been explored, nor should they be used as a punishment, as happened to my country, on which sanctions were imposed without any evidence of guilt — sanctions that the Security Council is prevented from lifting because one country will not allow it for political reasons.

We welcome the Secretary-General's call for the reform of the Security Council, not only to expand its membership but also radically to reform its methods of work, so as to enhance its credibility in fulfilling its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, as entrusted to it by the Charter, and to ensure that it is not used as a means for the powerful to achieve their political objectives.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the work of the Organization and on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. May I also congratulate him on the quality of these two important documents. I will focus here on the first report.

As in previous years, the question of international peace and security has occupied a pivotal place in the activities of the Organization. As the Secretary-General points out, some conflicts have seen some progress, whereas others, unfortunately, continue to give rise to concern. My delegation welcomes the laudable efforts that have been made by the United Nations to reduce tension in a number of hot spots around the world, giving rise to some notable breakthroughs during the course of the year 2002 in the settlement and management of crises, for example, in Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, and to a certain extent, in Sierra Leone.

It is my country's hope that the prospects for peace that have emerged recently in countries long beset by conflict can strengthen and lead to final and lasting resolution, be it in Angola, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Sudan or the Great Lakes region. However, it should be

emphasized that our Organization should stay with those countries as the peace is consolidated, which requires a global and integrated approach to the peace process with simultaneous action on several fronts — political, military, humanitarian and economic.

While we can be pleased at the positive results achieved in settling crises and peace-building, it remains true, nevertheless, that a number of challenges still need to be met. This is, unfortunately, the case in the Middle East, Liberia, Western Sahara, Somalia and Iraq.

Furthermore, my delegation believes that the significant achievements in conflict management have resulted, to a large extent, from the improvements made in the capacity for rapid deployment, training, and integrated planning for peacekeeping operations. We urge continued effective implementation of the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. We echo the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General regarding the shortage of personnel in peacekeeping operations. In this connection, we urge the troop-contributing countries to continue their efiorts so that the effectiveness of these missions will not be compromised.

The serious humanitarian consequences that have stemmed from armed conflicts and natural disasters, such as those discussed in the report, should receive more of our attention. The breadth and the range of humanitarian problems make it imperative that available means be augmented in order to ensure that appropriate emergency aid is forthcoming. The protection of civilians, which is at the heart of the action taken in complex emergency situations, is currently encountering great difficulties, including access to displaced persons, failure to respect fundamental humanitarian principles and rights, and inadequacy of financial resources.

In the light of the fifty million civilian persons displaced throughout the world as a result of conflicts or natural disasters, my delegation favours that policies and mechanisms be adopted at the level of the United Nations. We particularly welcome the specific support given by the inter-agency Unit on Internal Displacement, which was set up in January 2002 and has helped a number of countries, including my own, as part of its humanitarian operations. We believe that sending this kind of inter-disciplinary missions to unstable areas should be encouraged and supported.

Furthermore, my delegation would like to support the appeal by the Secretary-General to mobilize adequate resources for emergency actions. We welcome the appointment of an independent Security Coordinator at the rank of Assistant-Secretary-General. We are also grateful for the welcome initiatives that have led to the creation of sound partnerships with other international agencies, Governments and non-governmental organizations.

Another challenge that needs to be met, and not the least, is the eradication of poverty, which often is the root cause of instability. We believe, in this connection, that the attention given by our Organization to settling crises throughout the world should go hand in hand with efforts to combat poverty in accordance with the historic Millennium Summit Declaration. Important conferences that have been held over the last twelve months are a part of this ongoing effort. But more than ever, it is essential that the commitments entered into at these meetings be honoured so as to produce concrete solutions to development problems, particularly in Africa.

In that same vein, my delegation once again makes an earnest appeal for the international community to mobilize and provide support for the New Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD).

In conclusion, Sir, my delegation would like to reiterate its support to the Secretary-General and extends every good wish for success in the various actions he has initiated to the service of the community of nations.

Ms. Pérez Contreras (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation has read with interest the first report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the goals set forth in that Declaration, adopted by the heads of States and Governments of the whole world in September 2000.

In that Declaration, world leaders underscored common values, such as freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and common responsibility. On that basis, they expressed their intention to carry out concerted action on the international agenda of the twenty-first century, particularly in areas relating to international peace and

security, and the economic and social development of our peoples.

The target date of 2015 was set to achieve most of the Goals, including the eradication of poverty and hunger, the reduction of infant mortality and malnutrition, combating diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development.

My delegation believes that the General Assembly has the requisite structure to monitor implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and that there is no need to create new bodies for this purpose. However, there is a need for enhanced coordination among the principal organs of the United Nations and agencies in the system. The guide for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, a document presented by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in document A/57/387, represents the main methodological framework for such coordination.

Venezuela attaches the greatest of importance to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and believes in the need to forge an international environment in which South-South cooperation will be a crucial instrument. Re-starting the North-South dialogue will also be an urgent need, and the United Nations will be a fundamental component of this.

We believe that the aspirations of the Millennium Summit need to be seen together with the commitments undertaken at the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg Conferences. Achieving the objectives and goals which, together, target development and well-being for our nations will mean an endeavour of tremendous magnitude, involving everyone's pooled efforts to devise strategic partnerships at the multilateral level, among States, the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and other international agencies, as well as at the domestic level in all countries.

Hence, the importance of the Monterrey consensus, which is the outcome of decades of insistence on the part of the developing countries to try to combine the efforts of the Bretton Woods institutions and those of the United Nations. These efforts, in turn, have to go hand in hand with the resolve to liberalize trade and access to markets, expressed at Doha, with a view to fostering a more integrated trading system.

Likewise, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation reaffirms the international community's commitment to achieve the complete implementation of Agenda 21. The three-fold structure thus created highlights and reiterates the permanent need for strengthening international cooperation. We reaffirm the proposal of our President, Hugo Chávez Frías, to set up an international humanitarian fund, using a portion of the resources released by reduced military expenditure, among other things.

The priority given to Africa in the Millennium Declaration met with a satisfactory response this year. My delegation wishes to reaffirm its recognition of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative, which proposes new forms of cooperation and a dovetailing of interests between Africa and the developed world. We are certain that its success will open new avenues, not only for South-South cooperation, but also in the North-South context.

My delegation views with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization and the plans designed to adapt this work to the priorities and postulates of the Millennium Declaration. Venezuela believes that the United Nations must play a decisive and irreplaceable role in finding solutions to world economic problems, in fostering development and international cooperation, and in leading the struggle against international terrorism, while at the same time paying attention to other no less important political commitments that affect our nations, such as securing peace, security and international disarmament, bolstering democracy and governance in nations, strengthening national human rights institutions and providing electoral assistance in assisting the development of new and restored democracies.

Venezuela is in favour of strengthening the United Nations, given our conviction that multilateralism should be an effective instrument with which to forge common positions and resolve differences. Reform means revitalizing the General Assembly, restructuring the Security Council and making it more democratic; and bolstering the United Nations as a whole.

The course mapped out at the Millennium Summit, together with the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg Conferences as major milestones, should enable us to achieve the Millennium Development

Goals. But this will be true only if we can achieve a strategic partnership, sustained by genuine political resolve, among all the world's leaders who will act with decisiveness and commitment to their own nations.

Mr. Aboulhasan (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the State of Kuwait, allow me, Sir, to express our deep appreciation for all the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General in leading our Organization, as reflected in the various reports under discussion at this fifty-seventh session. In particular, I wish to mention his annual report on the work of the Organization. All of this shows how seriously he is taking his mandate and how he carries it out in the best possible way. I would also like to thank him for the statement he made in the General Assembly when we first started discussing this agenda item, at which time he stressed the importance of implementing the Declaration of the Millennium so that it would not become a mere memory. That could undermine the prestige held for our Organization in the eyes of our peoples, who are looking forward to seeing the United Nations play a greater role in the new millennium.

Before expressing our comments and opinions on the substantive issues contained in the two reports of the Secretary-General concerning the work of the Organization and the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Declaration, we would like to pay tribute to the measure adopted by the General Assembly in merging the discussion of the two items. We see this as a contribution to efforts made towards rationalization of the work of the General Assembly and reinforcement of its role.

Yet, at the same time, my delegation feels that rationalization and reform have not been fully covered when discussing these two items. Although we merged the discussion of the two items, we did not fully benefit from the rationalization, because it did not reduce the number of reports submitted, particularly since one of the proposals for rationalization and reform in the Secretary-General's most recent report calls for reducing the number of reports submitted in order to avoid repetition of these items.

After having studied the two reports dealing with agenda items 10 and 44, my delegation noted similarities in both the topics covered and the way in which they were dealt with. We would have hoped to see the Secretariat seize the opportunity — all States having agreed on the need to rationalize — to submit one single report that would cover both items: the Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Organization and the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Declaration, while mentioning that the one report would be covering both agenda items, 10 and 44.

Although we realize that General Assembly resolution 56/95, adopted at the last session, asks the Secretary-General to submit a separate special report on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Declaration, we would have hoped that the Secretariat, noting the similarity of the topics covered by the two reports, would have submitted one single report, including the two items, just as the Secretariat did in deciding to merge the discussion of the two reports.

Furthermore, such action would have been taken in implementation of that resolution, which called for a separate report on the Millennium Declaration.

My delegation believes that no one would object to such a positive approach. Indeed, we all are grateful for it because it will reduce the burden of work on both the Member States and the Secretariat. We also fear that, given that so many proposals and ideas are contained in the enormous number of important reports submitted by the Secretary-General, they will not elicit enough interest of Member States. We should recall that we have before us three important reports of the Secretary-General that we are called upon to examine: the report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration; the report on the reform of the Organization, under agenda item 53; and the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization.

Our delegation would like to make a number of comments on the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, as well as on his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. First, our delegation supports all the comments made by the Secretary-General on 10 September, when he introduced his annual report before the beginning of the general debate, concerning the pivotal role of the United Nations in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the principles of the Charter.

How do we reconcile those principles with some of the thorny issues raised by the Secretary-General, for example those relating to the principle of humanitarian intervention and the role of the United

Nations in this respect, as well as in guaranteeing respect for the sovereignty of all States. Despite having asked that rhetorical question, we would again like to say that we fully agree with the pessimistic views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report concerning the deterioration of certain conflict situations and other regrettable events that we have witnessed recently, in particular the terrorist attacks against the United States and the savagery perpetrated against the Palestinian people.

Secondly, our delegation supports the views expressed in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization with regard to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, in particular the issue of prisoners of war and Kuwaiti property. We agree with both the substance and the content of these paragraphs. Our position concerning those two issues was very clearly expressed in the address given by our Deputy Prime Minister in the general debate. Nevertheless, we find it difficult to understand why the Secretariat insists on using the term "missing persons" when referring to Kuwaiti prisoners of war. The Secretary-General and the Department of Political Affairs believe that they, as neutral parties, should use the language of Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 686 (1991), 687 (1991) and 1284 (1999), which use the term "Kuwaiti and third country nationals" — terminology with which we fully agree. Indeed, the Secretary-General used those terms in his annual report last year and in his report submitted to the Security Council pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999). We hope that that practice will be followed in the future.

Thirdly, our delegation notes for the second time that in the section on peacekeeping operations, the report does not refer to the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), which is based on the border between Iraq and Kuwait, or to any positive or negative developments in the situation there. It should be noted that Kuwait is voluntarily contributing two thirds of the budget of that force because of its steadfast belief in the vital importance of the United Nations presence in that region.

Fourthly, with regard to the administration of the Organization, Kuwait would like to pay tribute to the measures adopted by the Secretary-General recently to reinforce the role played by the United Nations in disseminating information on the culture of the United Nations among the States and peoples of the world through improved press and television coverage and the impressive services provided by the United Nations web site. In this respect, I would like to say that we look forward to the further strengthening of the capacities of the Arab section in the Department of Public Information, as it offers excellent services to researchers and specialists working with issues related to the United Nations in all the Arab States.

Because of its firm belief in the role of the United Nations in disseminating information, Kuwait was among the first States to support the partnership programme between the communications media and the United Nations to enable it to reach out to journalists all over the world. Here I refer to our firm support for the training programme for journalists and network correspondents in developing countries.

Fifthly, I would like to say that my country will comment on and provide an in-depth analysis of the efforts of the Secretary-General in the area of reforming and strengthening the Organization when we discuss the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the reform of the Organization under agenda item 53, entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations system".

Kuwait hopes that that subject will not be discussed in such a way as to overburden delegations — particularly the smaller ones — and effectively reduce them to the status of observers in a debate that is monopolized by certain delegations. We also hope that when we discuss those proposals we will not do so in haste, resulting in the adoption of decisions whose implications have been fully understood only by a very small number of delegations.

Ms. Raholinirina (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes, at the outset, to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration adopted two years ago by the leaders of the world, which appears in document A/57/270. That report provides us with an objective assessment of the implementation of commitments aimed at consolidating peace, development, combating infectious diseases, protecting the environment, respect for human rights and good governance, assistance to Africa and strengthening of the United Nations.

My delegation also wishes to pay tribute to the initiatives of our Secretary-General, particularly those

envisaged within the framework of the Millennium project designed to promote achievement of the goals contained in that historic document.

When it adopted the Millennium Declaration, the international community acknowledged the collective responsibility of all its members to build a more just, prosperous and peaceful world. Achieving the objectives contained in the Declaration and supported by the campaign pan, will require a clear understanding by all States of their interdependence and their common destiny. Those objectives are the same as those that have been spelled out in the various world conferences held in the 1990s that were aimed mainly at combating poverty, conflict prevention and protecting the environment. The scant progress achieved in those areas prompts us to move from commitment to implementation.

While paying tribute to efforts of the United Nations to further peace throughout the world, my delegation believes that much remains to be done to instil a culture of peace on our planet. In that context, Madagascar fully shares the view that, generally speaking, it is more humane and less costly to prevent a conflict than to have to manage its tragic consequences once it has erupted.

While it is true that the political will of Governments concerned is necessary to prevent conflict, at the same time, we must not lose sight of the international community's responsibility to create a global environment that is more just and that would reduce inequalities between States and within States that engender conflicts and political upheaval. In that connection, the point made by the Secretary-General in his report is a matter of considerable concern. The report says:

> "We confront a world divided between rich and poor as never before in human history...
>
> "The prospects for meeting the Millennium Development Goals given current trends, are decidedly mixed, with marked differences between and within regions". (*A/57/270, para. 38-39*)

Reducing the number of people living in extreme poverty between now and 2015 seems to be a remote target for many regions of the world, particularly for Africa, where most of the least developed countries are.

The report on least developed countries published this year by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) anticipates that the number of people living in extreme poverty will increase from 113 million in the least developed countries between now and 2015, if current trends continue. Far from improving, those trends may well grow worse because of the impact of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, which will mean that even more millions of people will be victimized by poverty. That gloomy picture is supplemented by an increase in arms expenditure, which diminishes any hope that the peace dividend will be allocated to development.

Nevertheless, according to the most recent report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on human development, all the Millennium Declaration objectives could be achieved if official development assistance were to be supplemented by at least a fraction of current military expenses.

The Millennium Declaration, unanimously adopted by the leaders of the industrialized countries, presupposes that they are unanimously committed to demonstrating solidarity with the developing countries and that it is in their interest to help those countries become fully integrated into the world economy. Furthermore, that idea is implicitly recognized in the resolutions of the Fourth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, held in Doha in November 2001, and explicitly in the Monterrey Consensus, as well as in the course of World Summit on Sustainable Development, recently held in Johannesburg.

The Millennium Declaration goals are neither utopian nor overly ambitious, provided that we are firmly resolved to see them through. Achieving those objectives will require our determination to work together for a more equitable economy, in which all countries can enjoy conditions of fair competition and the "haves" will do more for the "have nots". Without the mobilization of the necessary financial resources and the appropriate economic conditions, both nationally and internationally, "the ringing words of the Declaration will serve only as grim reminders of human needs neglected and promises unmet", as the Secretary-General said so aptly in his report.

If, in one way or another, States find the $800 billion for their annual armaments expenditures, surely they can contribute at least a small part of that to

policies designed to prevent war and tackle poverty, one of the underlying causes of conflicts.

As the continent most affected by poverty and other scourges, including the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Africa needs more than ever international support and solidarity to rescue it from abject poverty. Africa's efforts to take charge of itself and to attain self-sufficiency, reflected within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), deserve to be acknowledged and supported by the international community.

Constituting an enormous reservoir of dynamism and potential, the developing countries prefer trade to aid and solidarity to charity, so that the harmonious development of all States, as envisaged by the Charter, becomes a reality, rather than a mere pious wish.

Despite the numerous challenges that await us in achieving the Millennium Declaration Goals, Madagascar is convinced that, given political will and adequate resources, a coordinated strategy and appropriate cooperation at all levels, the implementation of the Millennium Declaration goals will yield better results.

In synergy with the international community, Madagascar is ready to cooperate with all the components of the United Nations family to offer mankind a more dignified and safer world that is free of fear and need.

Mr. Al-Taieeb (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish, at the outset, to join my colleagues in expressing appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization during the past year.

I must praise the great effort made in producing this report, which is indeed comprehensive and accurate, dealing with developments witnessed last year by the international community. Also praiseworthy is the role of the Organization for its handling of the issues of security and peace, as well as economic, social and developmental issues. I would like to pay tribute in particular to the realism of the report when it alludes to the fears of many people that the world this year has become a more dangerous place than it was years ago.

Observers of the international situation perceive that the main reason for the decline in the feelings of security for many people is due to the fact that many countries have given up on their commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, and are not respecting the norms of international law. This is in addition to the fact that the international community has not stood up decisively and forcefully to those who lurk outside international legality. Thus injustice, oppression and violence have prevailed and, consequently, people have lost their security and peace of mind.

The inhuman practices occurring in the occupied Palestinian territories, including killings, assassinations, demolitions of houses and repeated siege conditions imposed by the Israeli occupying forces against unarmed Palestinian people and their legitimate leadership, is an embodiment of the policy of injustice and State terrorism and an example of disrespect for the principles of the United Nations and international law.

Israel has previously refused to implement all the resolutions of the United Nations that are relevant to its occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 194 (1948). It refused this year to receive the fact-finding mission constituted by the Secretary-General, at the behest of the Security Council, in its unanimously adopted resolution 1405 (2002), in order to investigate the horrors perpetrated by the Israeli occupying force in Jenin. This led the Secretary-General to dissolve the fact-finding team before it could visit the area.

Israel again has rejected the implementation of Council resolution 1435 (2002), which calls for an immediate withdrawal of the Israeli occupying forces from the Palestinian towns to the areas where they were before September 2000. This Israeli position, which rejects the implementation of all international resolutions relevant to its occupation of Palestinian territories and other Arab territories, on the one hand, and the fact that the international community has not forced Israel to implement these resolutions, on the other, cause the Palestinian people, suffering from the horrors of Israeli occupation, to continue to feel insecure and to live in fear and horror.

The feeling of security is declining in the world because of the growth of terrorism, a phenomenon which my country had warned against, calling many times for intensifying international efforts to combat it. Saudi Arabia was one of the first countries to ratify the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and

the Islamic Convention on Combatting International Terrorism. On the international level, my country has acceded to many international conventions and agreements to combat terrorism. Therefore, it was only natural that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was among the first States that have strongly condemned the terrorist attacks on the United States last year, considering these attacks as a criminal act that fully contradicts religious teachings and all values of humanity and civilization.

In the context of combating terrorism, Saudi Arabia cooperates with all parties, whether bilaterally or multilaterally, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001).

It is regrettable and worrisome, however, that the terrorist attacks that occurred on 11 September in the United States have generated a phenomenon no less dangerous than terrorism itself. If it continued, it would become the main nutrient for terrorism in the future. This is the phenomenon of spreading hostility and hatred against Arabs and Moslems.

Some evil circles, in some countries, have understood these terrorist attacks outside of their true and real meaning. They have waged a hostile campaign against Arabs and Moslems in an attempt to accuse them of terrorism. There is not enough time here to deal with such a hostile campaign and to put an end to it. However, everybody knows that Islam, as other revealed religions, prohibits killing a person without justification and punishes very severely anybody who commits murder. Islam is a revealed religion that calls for justice, equality and peace, a religion that condemns violence.

Furthermore, it is not possible that a whole nation, which constitutes nearly one-fifth of the world's population, could be accused of terrorism just because some individuals belonging to it have participated in such a crime. It was never the case before that all Jews and Christians were accused of the sins perpetrated by some members of their religion. Why then is this principle applied to Arabs and Moslems?

While we condemn this dangerous trend, and we warn against such a phenomenon that could cause hatred between different populations, we call upon this Organization to do all it can to confront this phenomenon which is based on racism and xenophobia, to promote the culture of peace and dialogue between cultures, and to deepen the values of forgiveness, justice and equality between nations and peoples, so that peace and security prevail all over the world.

The issue of disarmament is one of the highest priorities for my country. It is thus regrettable to see, through reading the Secretary-General's report for this year, that the multilateral forums for disarmament have not witnessed any international cooperation during the past year. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports all international efforts aimed at general and complete disarmament, particularly weapons of mass destruction. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has acceded to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and to the International Convention for the Prohibition of Biological and Chemical Weapons.

My country participates also in the international and regional efforts to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. In this respect, we should note that, despite the fact that the United Nations General Assembly issues annually, since 1974, a resolution calling for making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, this objective has not been achieved because of the rejection by one country in the region, Israel. It refuses to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to submit its nuclear programmes to full scope safeguards under the International Atomic Energy Agency's supervision. Therefore, my country calls upon the international community to take all necessary measures to ensure that the Middle East is free of all weapons of mass destruction, a matter which will contribute largely to bring about security and stability in the region and the world as a whole.

In conclusion, I should like to stress the great importance that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia accords the United Nations and its primary role in maintaining international peace, security and stability and in fostering development and prosperity so that the world will become a secure place for everyone. That, in our view, is based on respect for the principles and goals of the United Nations in the implementation of international legitimacy.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items in this meeting. We shall continue the debate this afternoon at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.